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August 29, 2002

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D. *Thomas L. Garthwaite*
Director and Chief Medical Officer

SUBJECT: **ACTION PLAN TO ENSURE THAT CLOPYRALID IS KEPT OUT OF
COMPOSTING SITES**

On January 15, 2002, the Board approved a motion by Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, instructing the Department of Health Services and the Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures Environmental Toxicology Bureau, in conjunction with the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, to investigate the use of the chemical Clopyralid on lawns and wheat crops, and to report back with recommendations and an action plan to ensure that this chemical is kept out of composting sites.

PILOT STUDY

On February 15, 2002, I reported that representatives of this Department, the Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures Environmental Toxicology Bureau, and the County Sanitation District conferred and recommended a 90-day study period to assess the full extent of the clopyralid problem and to provide the information necessary to prepare an action plan.

During this 90-day study period, we agreed to generate a list of users and producers of compost material and green waste, develop a sampling and testing protocol, and sample and test the compost to determine the extent of any clopyralid presence.

INTERIM RESULTS

On June 20, 2002, I reported that 32 of the more than 50 potential sampling sites had been visited, 38 discrete samples had been taken, and the test results for 29 of these sites, which have been received, came back with levels of clopyralid below the 5 ppb detection limit.

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As of August 26, 2002, 62 potential sampling sites had been reduced to 49 sites through further investigation. The last eight sites had been visited as of August 23, 2002, and 52 discrete samples were taken. So far, test results for 44 samples have been received and none had detectable levels of clopyralid at the 5 ppb detection limit. In addition, follow-up work to determine the fate of feedstock/green waste from golf courses and smaller stables is being conducted. The completion of this follow-up work depends upon the response from the operators of these facilities.

It had been anticipated that a report with recommendations for further actions would be developed by August 30, 2002. However, the Agricultural Commissioner's laboratory has indicated that the results from the last of the 52 samples will not be ready until September 13, 2002. Therefore, we expect to provide the final report by September 30, 2002.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

TLG:su
201:018

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Agricultural Commissioner/Director of Weights and Measures
Chief Engineer and General Manager, County Sanitation District